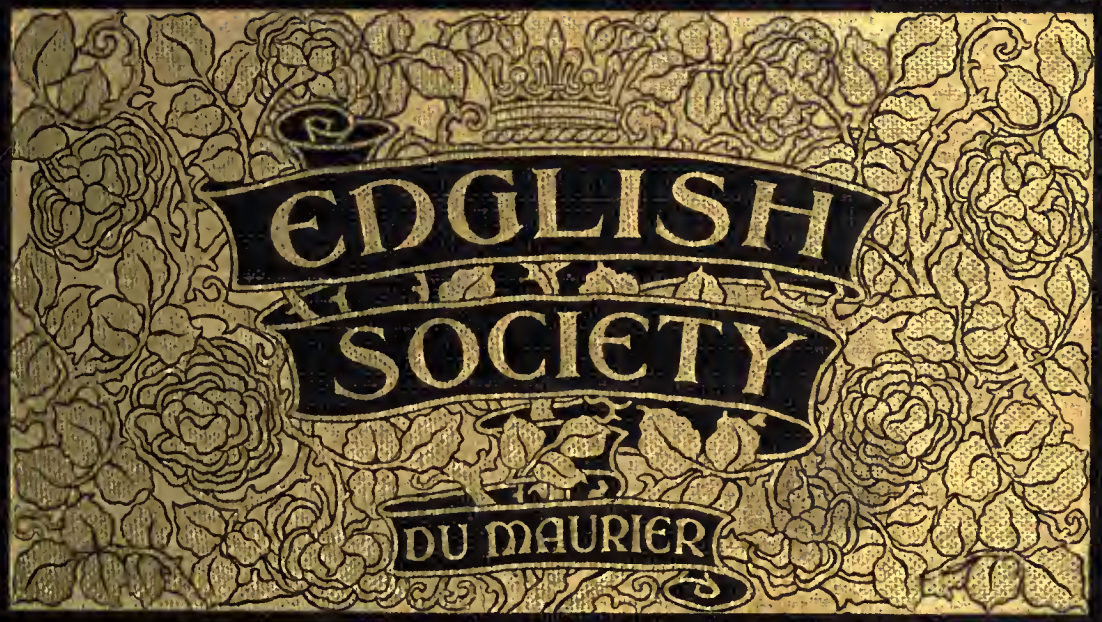
ENGLISH
SOCIETY
DU MAURIER

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To Mrs. Hearst. 1896.

A Merry Christmas,

Henry A. Whitley.

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Geo. du Maurier

ENGLISH SOCIETY

SKETCHED BY

GEORGE DU MAURIER

NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS
1897

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GEORGE DU MAURIER

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I WAS thinking, with a pang, just before I put my pen to the paper, that the death of George du Maurier must be a fact of stale interest to the reader already, and that it would be staler yet by the time my words reached him. So swiftly does the revolving world carry our sorrow into the sun, our mirth into the shade, that it is as if the speed of the planet had caught something of the impatience of age, and it were hurried round upon its axis with the quickened pulses of senility. But perhaps this is a delusion of ours who dwell in the vicissitude of events, and there are still spots on the earth's whirling surface, lurking-places of quiet, where it seems not to move, and there is time to remember and to regret; where it is no astonishing thing that a king should be a whole month dead, and yet not forgotten. At any rate, it is in the hope, if not quite the faith, of this that I venture some belated lines concerning a man whom we have lost just when he seemed beginning to reveal himself.

I.

It was my good fortune to have the courage to write to Du Maurier when *Trilby* was only half printed, and to tell him how much I liked the gay, sad story. In every way it was well that I did not wait for the end, for the last third of it seemed to me so altogether forced in its conclusions that I could not have offered my praises with a whole heart, nor he accepted them with any, if the disgust with its preposterous popularity, which he so frankly, so humorously expressed, had then begun in him. But the liking which its readers felt had not yet become loathsome to the author, and he wrote me back a charming note, promising me the mystery, and enough of it, which I had hoped for, because of my pleasure in the true-dreaming in *Peter Ibbetson;* and speaking briefly, most modestly and fitly, of his commencing novelist at sixty, and his relative misgivings and surprises.

It was indeed one of the most extraordinary things in the history of literature, and without a parallel, at least to my ignorance. He might have commenced and failed; that would have been indefinitely less amaz-

ing than his most amazing success; but it was very amazing that he should have commenced at all. It is useless to say that he had commenced long before, and in the literary property of his work he had always been an author. This theory will not justify itself to any critical judgment; one might as well say, if some great novelist distinguished for his sense of color took to painting, that he had always been an artist. The wonder of Du Maurier's essay, the astounding spectacle of his success, cannot be diminished by any such explanation of it. He commenced novelist in *Peter Ibbetson*, and so far as literature was concerned he succeeded in even greater fulness than he has succeeded since. He had perfect reason to be surprised; he had attempted an experiment, and he had performed a miracle.

As for the nature, or the quality, of his miracle, that is another question. I myself think that in all essentials it was fine. The result was not less gold because there was some dross of the transmuted metals hanging about the precious ingot, and the evidences of the process were present, though the secret was as occult as ever. He won the heart, he kindled the fancy, he bewitched the reason; and no one can say just how he did it. His literary attitude was not altogether new; he perfected an attitude

recognizable first in Fielding, next in Sterne, then in Heine, afterwards in Thackeray: the attitude which I once called confidential, and shook three realms beyond seas, and their colonial dependencies here, with the word. It is an attitude which I find swaggering in Fielding, insincere in Sterne, mocking in Heine, and inartistic in Thackeray; but Du Maurier made it lovable. His whole story was a confidence; whatever illusion there was resided in that fact; you had to grant it in the beginning, and he made you grant it gladly. A trick? Yes; but none of your vulgar ones; a species of legerdemain, exquisite as that of the Eastern juggler who plants his ladder on the ground, climbs it, and pulls it up after him into the empty air. It wants seriousness, it wants the last respect for the reader's intelligence, it wants critical justification; it wants whatever is the very greatest thing in the very greatest novelists; the thing that convinces in Hawthorne, George Eliot, Tourguénief, Tolstoy. But short of this supreme truth, it has every grace, every beauty, every charm. It touches, it appeals, it consoles; and it flatters, too; if it turns the head, if it intoxicates, well, it is better to own the fact that it leaves one in not quite the condition for judging it. I made my tacit protest against it after following Trilby, poor soul, to her apotheosis at the hands of the world and the

church; but I fell a prey to it again in the first chapters of *The Martian*, and I expect to continue in that sweet bondage to the end.

II.

If I venture to say that sentimentality is the dominant of the Du Maurier music, it is because his art has made sentimentality beautiful; I had almost said real, and I am ready to say different from what it was before. It is a very manly sentimentality; we need not be ashamed of sharing it; one should rather be ashamed of disowning its emotions. It is in its sweetness, as well as its manliness, that I find the chief analogy between Du Maurier's literature and his art. In all the long course of his dealing with the life of English society, I can think of but two or three instances of ungentleness. The humor which shone upon every rank, and every variety of character, never abashed the lowly, never insulted women, never betrayed the trust which reposed in its traditions of decency and generosity. If we think of any other caricaturist's art, how bitter it is apt to be, how brutal, how base! The cruelties that often pass for wit, even in the best of our own society satires, never tempted him to their

ignoble exploitation; and as for the filthy drolleries of French wit, forever amusing itself with one commandment, how far they all are from him! His pictures are full of the dearest children, lovely young girls, honest young fellows; snobs who are as compassionable as they are despicable, bores who have their reason for being, hypocrites who are not beyond redemption. It is in his tolerance, his final pity of all life, that Du Maurier takes his place with the great talents; and it is in his sympathy for weakness, for the abased and outcast, that he classes himself with the foremost novelists of the age, not one of whom is recreant to the high office of teaching by parable that we may not profitably despise one another. Not even Svengali was beyond the pale of his mercy, and how well within it some other sorts of sinners were, the grief of very respectable people testified.

I will own myself that I like heroes and heroines to be born in wedlock when they conveniently can, and to keep true to it; but if an author wishes to suppose them otherwise I cannot proscribe them except for subsequent misbehavior in his hands. The trouble with Trilby was not that she was what she was imagined, but that finally the world could not imaginably act with regard to her as the author feigned. Such as she are

to be forgiven, when they sin no more; not exalted and bowed down to by all manner of elect personages. But I fancy Du Maurier did not mean her to be an example. She had to be done something with, and after all she had suffered, it was not in the heart of poetic justice to deny her a little morituary triumph.

Du Maurier was not a censor of morals, but of manners, which indeed are or ought to be the flower of morals, but not their root, and his deflections from the straight line in the destiny of his creations must not be too seriously regarded. I take it that the very highest fiction is that which treats itself as fact, and never once allows itself to be otherwise. This is the kind that the reader may well hold to the strictest accountability in all respects. But there is another kind capable of expressing an engaging beauty, and bewitchingly portraying many phases of life, which comes smiling to you or (in vulgar keeping) nudging you, and asking you to a game of make-believe. I do not object to that kind either, but I should not judge it on such high grounds as the other. I think it reached its perfect effect in Du Maurier's hands, and that this novelist, who wrote no fiction till nigh sixty, is the greatest master in that sort who ever lived, and I do not forget either Sterne or Thackeray when I say so.

III.

When I first spoke, long ago, of the confidential attitude of Thackeray, I said that now we would not endure it. But I was wrong, if I meant that more than the very small number who judge novels critically would be impatient of it. No sooner were those fearful words printed than I began to find, to my vast surprise, that the confidential attitude in Thackeray was what most pleased the greatest number of his readers. This gave me an ill opinion of their taste, but I could not deny the fact; and the obstreperous triumph of *Trilby*, which was one long confidence, has since contributed to render my defeat overwhelming. Du Maurier's use of the method, as he perfected it, was so charming that I am not sure but I began to be a little in love with it myself, though ordinarily superior to its blandishments. It was all very well to have Thackeray weep upon your neck over the fortunes of his characters, but if he had just been telling you they were puppets, it was not so gratifying; and as for poor Sterne, his sighs were so frankly insincere you could not believe anything he said. But Du Maurier came with another eye for life, with a faith of his own

which you could share, and with a spirit which endeared him from the first. He had prodigious novelties in store: true-dreaming, hypnotism, and now (one does not know quite what yet) intelligence from the neighborly little planet Mars. He had the gift of persuading you that all his wonders were true, and his flattering familiarity of manner heightened the effect of his wonders, like that of the prestidigitator, who passes round in his audience, chatting pleasantly, while he pours twenty different liquors out of one magical bottle.

I would not count his beautiful talent at less than its rare worth, and if this figure belittles that, it does him wrong. Not before in our literature has anything more distinct, more individual, made itself felt. I have assumed to trace its descent, from this writer to that; but it was only partly so descended; in what made it surprising and captivating, it was heaven-descended. We shall be the lonelier and the poorer hereafter for the silence which is to be where George du Maurier might have been.

W. D. Howells.

ENGLISH SOCIETY

POST-PRANDIAL STUDIES

FAIR HOSTESS (*passing the wine*).—"I hope you admire this decanter, Admiral?"
GALLANT ADMIRAL.—"Ah! it's not the vessel I am admiring. . . ."
FAIR HOSTESS.—"I suppose it's the *port*?"
GALLANT ADMIRAL.—"Oh, no; it's the pilot."

HAMPERED WITH A CONSCIENCE

TOMMY (*home from an afternoon party*).—"Mamma, darling, I've got a great favor to ask of you. . . . *Please* don't ask me *how I behaved!*"

FELINE AMENITIES

OLD LADY (*to fashionable beauty, who has recently married the General*).—"And so that white-haired old darling is your husband! What a good-looking couple you must once have been!"

TAKING THE CHANCES

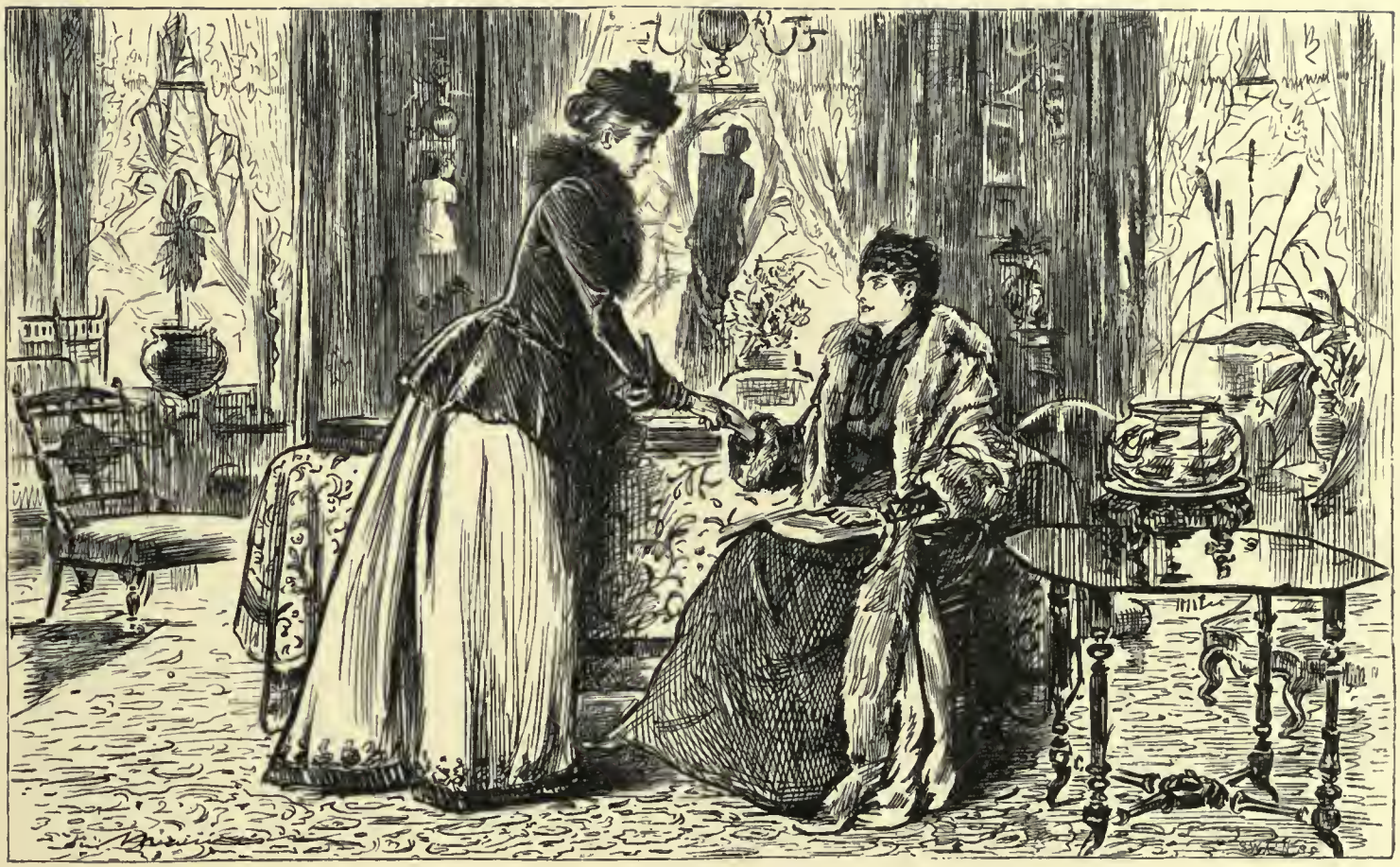
THE GENERAL.—"I've brought you a new book, Aunt Emily, by the new French Academician. I'm told it's very good; but I've not read it myself, so I'm not sure it's quite—a—quite correct, you know."

AUNT EMILY.—"My dear boy, I'm ninety-six, and I'll *risk* it!"

TRIALS OF A PAINTER'S WIFE

SIR BINKS (*who always piques himself on saying just the right thing*).—"A—what I like so much about the milkmaid, dontcherknow, is that your husband hasn't fallen into the usual mistake of painting a lady dressed up in milkmaid's clothes! She's so unmistakably a milkmaid and nothing else, dontcherknow!"

THE PAINTER'S WIFE.—"I'm *so* glad you think so. . . . He painted her from *me!*"



LADIES OF FASHION AND THEIR DOCTORS

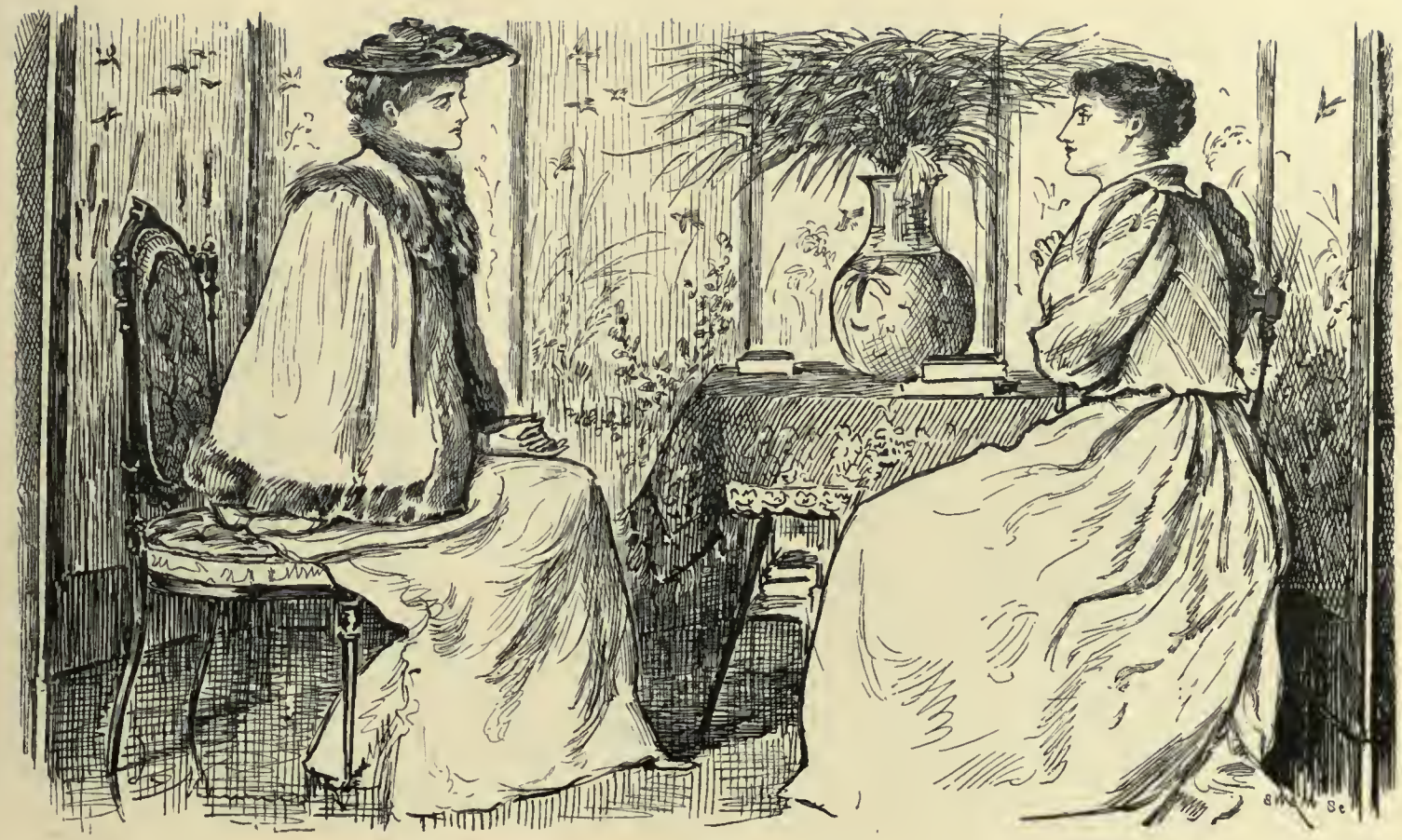
(SCENE: The Waiting-Room of a Fashionable Physician.)

FAIR PATIENT (*just ushered in*).—"What—*you* here, Lizzie? Why, ain't you *well?*"
SECOND DITTO.—"Perfectly, thanks! But what's the matter with *you*, dear?"
FIRST DITTO.—"Oh, nothing whatever! I'm as right as possible, dearest . . .!"

"BONJOUR, SUZON!"

RIVAL SMALL AND EARLIES

MOTHER'S DARLINGS



DAYLIGHT WISDOM

ELDER SISTER.—"Oh! he proposed after supper, did he—after dancing with you all night—and you refused him? Quite right! My dear child, never believe in *any* proposal until the young man calls at eleven in the morning and asks you to be his wife!"

AN UNAPPRECIATED COMPLIMENT

"Good-night, Miss Maud!"

"I'm *not* Miss Maud."

"Miss *Ethel*, I mean. Won't you shake hands with me? How ungrateful of you! and just after I've been taking you for your lovely sister, too."

LE MONDE OÙ L'ON S'ENNUIE

"I see a tent. I wonder what's going on inside? Let's go and see. . . ."
"What's the good of our going in there?"
"What's the good of our stopping out here?"

THE TABLES TURNED

TIRED DAUGHTERS.—"Don't you think we might *go* now, mamma? It's three o'clock."
FESTIVE MAMMA.—"Oh, that's not so *very* late, darlings. . . . Mayn't I have *one* more dance?"

A SLEEPY HOLLOW IN THE OLD COUNTRY

(The Common Room at St. Morpheus, Oxbridge.)

First Tutor (*waking up, and languidly helping himself to his modest glass of claret*).—"Ah! I like a little sleep after dinner. . . . It makes one ready for one's wine!"

Second Tutor.—"Well, *I* like a little sleep *before* dinner best!"

The Master.—"Pooh! Talk to me of the after-breakfast sleep in term-time! That's what *I* enjoy!!"

TAKING ONE TOO MUCH AT ONE'S WORD

HOSTESS.—"Won't you play us something, Mr. Spinks?"

MUSICAL AMATEUR (*who thinks a good deal of himself, in spite of his modesty*).—"Oh, don't ask me—you are all such first-rate performers here—and you play such good music, too."

HOSTESS.—"Well, but we like a little *variety*, you know."

THE ENGLISH TAKE THEIR PLEASURES SADLY

A DAUGHTER OF HETH

LIONEL.—"Oh, I *say*, Benjamin! how splendid your wife is looking! *She* pays for dressing, if you *like!*"
BENJAMIM.—"*Does* she, my boy? I only wish she *did!*"

A QUESTION OF AGE

TEDDY.—"How old are you, Aunt Milly?"
AUNT MILLY (*who owns to 35*).—"Oh, Teddy, almost a hundred!"
TEDDY.—"Auntie, I can't believe you! I'd believe you if you'd said fifty!"

BREAKFAST AT BONNEBOUCHE HALL

"A southerly wind and a cloudy sky proclaim a hunting morning."

BUSINESS

Sir Bedivere de Vere.—"Oh, I say. How you do chaff! You never take me seriously!"
American Belle.—"You never asked me!" *(No cards.)*

DOMESTIC ECONOMY

MATER.—"Papa, dear, do you know a halfpenny weekly paper called *Flipbutts?*"

PATER.—"Never heard of it in my life!"

MATER.—"Well, it offers ninepence a column for answering questions, and they *are* so difficult, and we *do* so want to make a little money! Do leave off your novel and help us a little." (*Pater can only write two novels a year, but gets £10,000 for each of them.*)

WHAT INDUCED HIM TO MARRY HER?

HE.—"Look! Here comes young Brummell Washington, with his bride. I wonder what on earth induced him to marry her?"
SHE.—"Oh, probably somebody bet him he wouldn't!"

A CLAIM TO SOCIAL PRECEDENCE

HOSTESS.—"You must give your arm to Miss Malecho, William, and put her on your right, and make yourself as agreeable as you possibly can!"

HOST.—"Why, she's a person of no consequence whatever!"

HOSTESS.—"Oh, yes, she is! She's very ill-natured, and tells the most horrid lies about people if they don't pay her the very greatest attention!"

AN INTRODUCTION

"Auntie, darling, this is my new friend, Georgie Jones. He *is* nice. And isn't it funny, my birthday is the ninth of January, and his is the tenth, so you see we only just escaped being twins!"

BANJONALITIES

(The Freemasonry of Art.)

HE.—"I beg your pardon—but—er would you be so kind as to give me the 'G'?"

SHE.—"Oh, certainly." (*Gives it.*)

HE.—"Thanks, awfully!" (*Bows and proceeds on his way.*)

TEUTONIC SATIRE

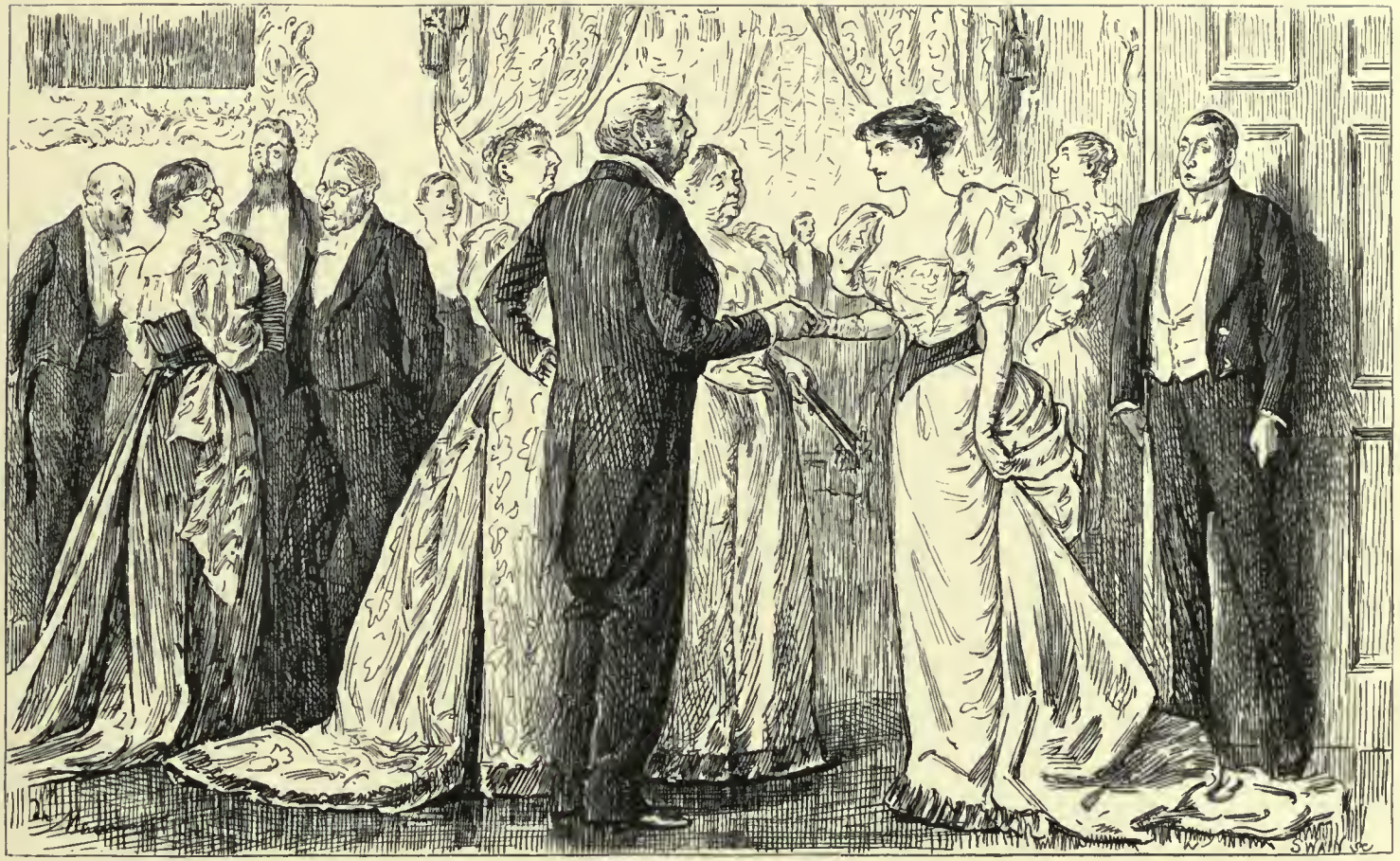
HOSTESS.—"Oh, *pray* don't leave off, Herr Rosencranz. That was a lovely song you just began!"

EMINENT BARYTONE.—"Yes, matame, bot it tit not harmonise viz de cheneral gonferzation. It is in *B vlat*, and you and all your vrents are talking in *G*. I haf a zong in *F* and a zong in *A sharp*, bot I haf no zong in *G!*"

ACCOMPANIST.—"Ach! Berhaps, to opliche matame, I could dransbose de aggombaniments—ja?"

REASONING FROM INDUCTION

"Look, Geoffrey! That's Lady Emily Tomlinson. Isn't she pretty?"
"Yes. And I s'pose that's *Lord* Emily walking with her!"



THOSE INFELICITOUS SPEECHES

PROFESSOR BOREHAM.—"What! alone, Mrs. Highflyer? Your husband is not ill, I trust!"
MRS. HIGHFLYER (*innocently*).—"Oh no; but he was afraid he might be, if he came here!"

SOCIAL PERSEVERANCE

MRS. ONSLOW-PUSHINGTON.—"What a very singular woman Lady Masham *is*, Professor! I have called on her every Wednesday this month, and the footman (who knows me perfectly) always said she was out, though Wednesday's her day at home, and there were lots of carriages at the door! She never calls on me—never! And when I bow to her, as I always do, she always looks another way, as she did just now. I must really call again next Wednesday."

THE LAST STRAW!

"What's the matter, dearest? You look sad. . . ."

"Oh, everything's going wrong. The children are ill in bed, and nurse has got the influenza, and my husband declares that ruin is staring us in the face, and I've got an unbecoming frock, and altogether I'm thoroughly depressed. . . ."

(*Breaks down.*)

JUST IN TIME FOR A CUP OF TEA

FELINE AMENITIES

THE MISSES TIPTYLTE.—"Such fun! We're going to Mrs. Masham's fancy ball as Cinderella's ugly sisters—with false noses, you know!"
MISS AQUILA SHARPE.—"What a capital idea! But why false noses?"

NEIGHBORLY COMPLIMENTS

"Tell me, Mrs. Jones, who's that young Adonis your married daughter is looking up to so eagerly?"
"Her *husband*, Mrs. Snarley!"
"Dear me, you don't say so! I congratulate you. . . . Now I understand how you come to have such good-looking grandchildren."

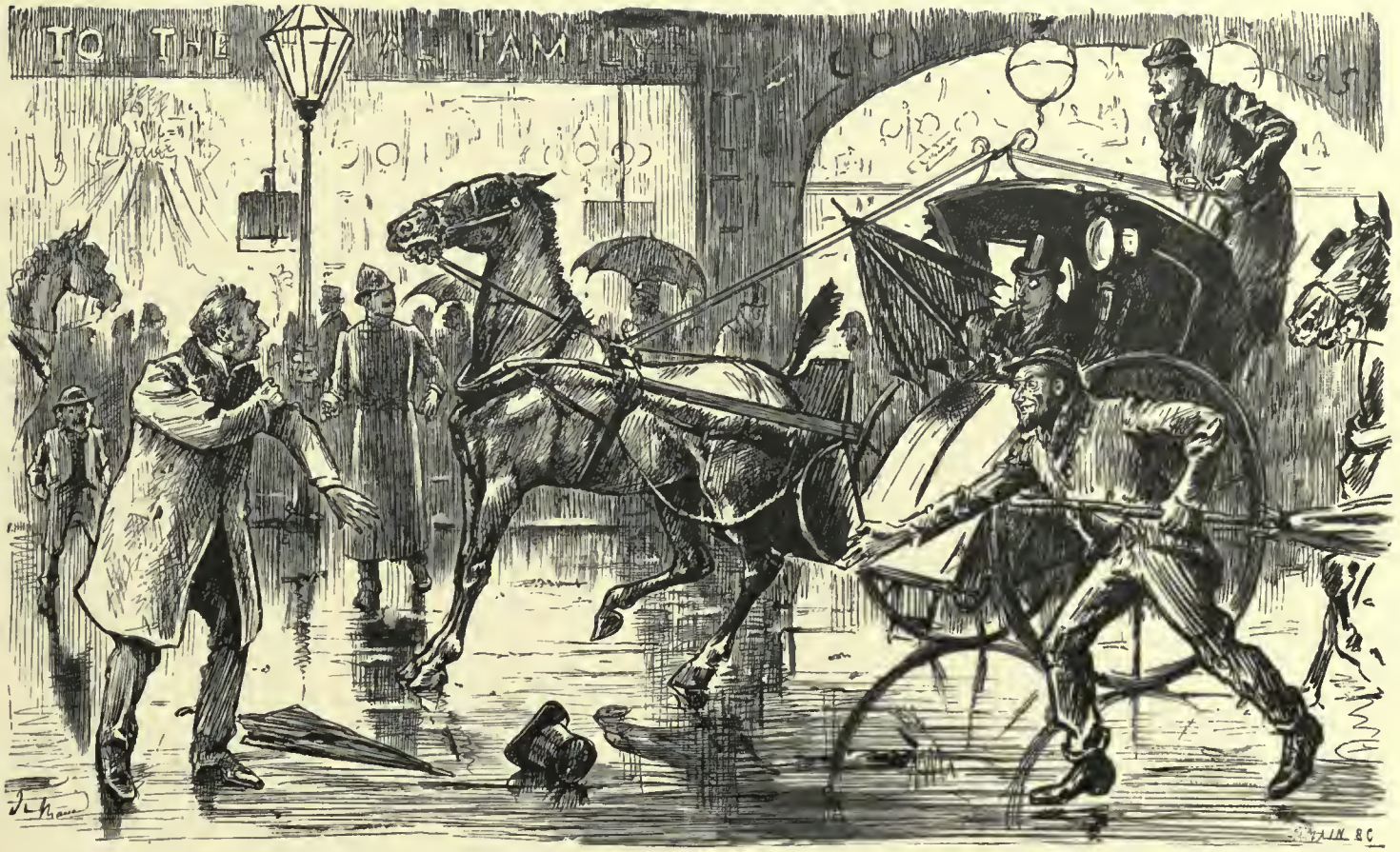
GENTLE TERRORISM

THE PROFESSOR.—"Will you give me a kiss, my dear?"
EFFIE (*an habitually naughty girl*).—"Oh, mammie. . . . I'll be *good*, I'll be *good*. . . . I promise!"

AN UNPLEASANT SOCIAL DUTY

HOSTESS.—"Geoffrey, I want you to dance with that little girl!"

GEOFFREY.—"Oh, well, if I must, I *must* . . .!"



STREET DIALECTICS

BROWN (*who was all but run over*).—"Why didn't you call out *sooner*, you stupid ass?"
CABBY.—"I *did*, sir!"
BROWN.—"Why didn't you call out *louder*, then?"
CABBY.—"I *did*, sir!"

EQUAL TO THE OCCASION

MRS. GUSHINGTON.—"Oh! oh! what a lovely, *lovely* picture! So true, so . . ."
OUR ARTIST.—"Wait a bit, Mrs. Gushington—it's wrong side up. . . . Let me put it right first . . .!" (*Does so.*)
MRS. GUSHINGTON (*unabashed*).—"Oh! oh! oh! Why, *that* way it's even more lovely still!"

PRECEDENCE AT BONNEBOUCHE HALL DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Grandpapa takes the bride in to dinner, and the rest follow anyhow.

HISTRIONIC EGOTISM

OUR PET ACTOR (*just arrived*).—"By Jove—these good people all seem to know me very well—nodding and smiling"—(*nods and smiles himself, right and left*)—"uncommonly flattering, I'm sure—considering I've never set foot in the town before!"

OUR PET ARTIST (*his chum*).—"I'm afraid it's *me* they're nodding and smiling at, old man! I come every year, you know—and know every soul in the place!"

A STATELY STAIRCASE WINDS
AROUND A LARGE HALL

HOW REPUTATIONS OF DISTINGUISHED AMATEURS ARE SOMETIMES MADE

HERR SILBERMUND (the Great Pianist) TO MRS. TATTLER.—"Ach, Lady Creichton has for *bainting* der most remârrgaple chênius. Look at *dis!* It is eqval to Felasquez!"

M. LANGUEDOR (the Famous Painter) TO MISS GUSHINGTON.—"Ah! For ze music, Miladi Crétonne has a talent kvite exceptionnel. Listen to *zat!* It surpass Madame Schumann!"

EOTHEN

Cook's Tourist (*female*).—"What's that jagged white line on the horizon, I wonder?"

Cook's Tourist (*male*).—"*Snow*, probably!"

Cook's Tourist (*female*).—"Ah! that's much more likely! I heard the captain saying it was *Greece!*"

THE DANCING MAN OF THE PERIOD

"Been dancin' at all?"

"Dancin'? Not I! Catch me dancin' in a house where there ain't a smokin'-room! I'm off, directly!"

UNCONSCIOUS CYNICISM

SHE.—"It's such years since we met that perhaps you never heard of my marriage?"
HE.—"No, indeed! Is it—er—recent enough for congratulations?"

UNLUCKY SPEECHES

SHE.—"What a disagreeable thing that insomnia must be! Very trying, I think! Do *you* ever suffer from it, Captain Spinks?"
HE.—"Oh, dear, no. I can sleep anywhere, at any time! Could go off *this moment*, I assure you . . .!"

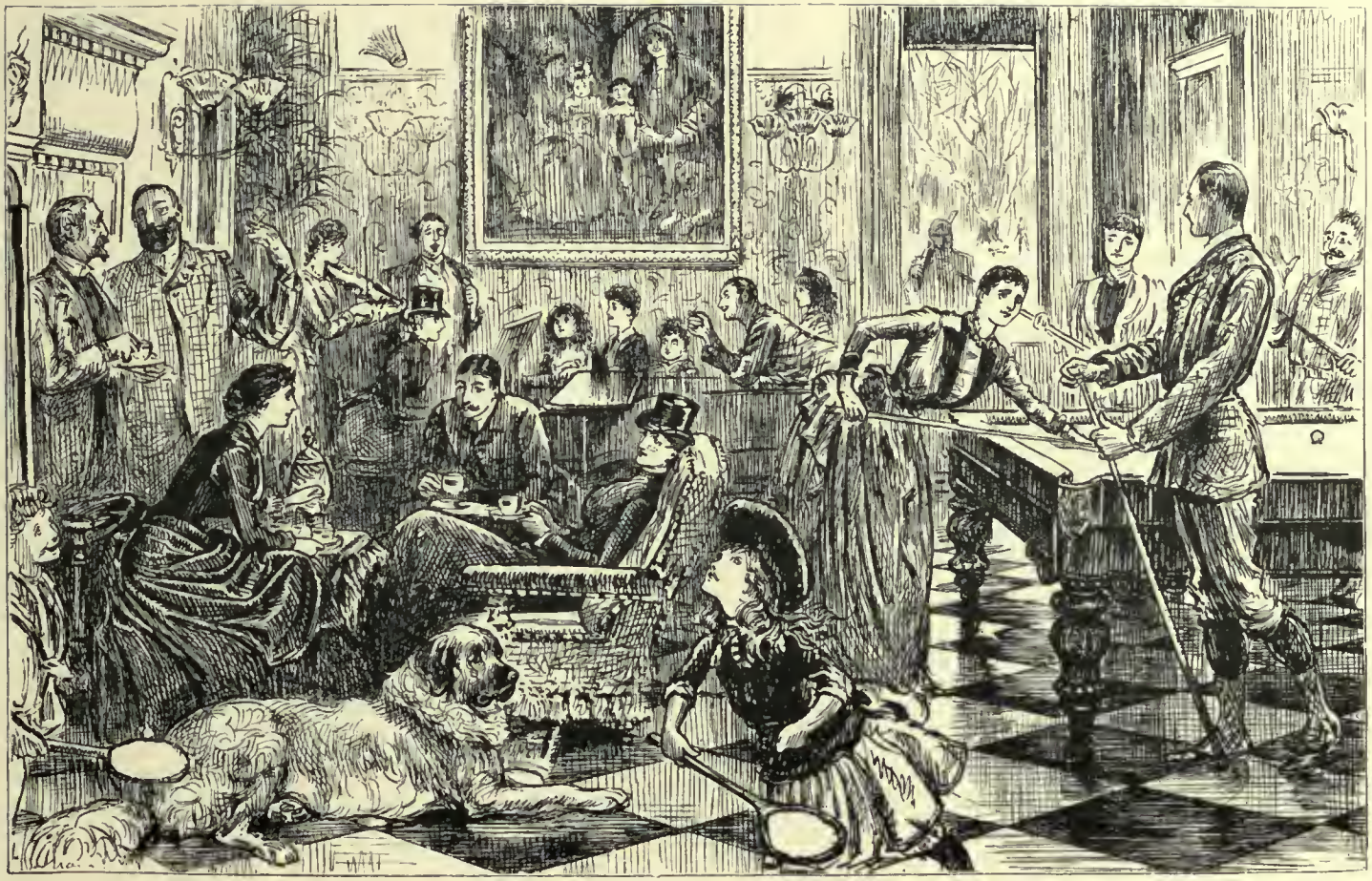
FIN DE SIÈCLE

"That's where poor Mrs. Wilkins used to live!"

"Why '*poor*' Mrs. Wilkins?"

"Well, her husband was killed in that horrid railway accident, don't you remember?"

"Oh, but that was *months* ago!"



A CUP OF TEA AND A QUIET CIGARETTE AFTER LUNCH

PRECEDENCE IN VANITY FAIR

The lady guests go in to dinner with the host and young Sir John and young Sir James and the Hon. Dick Swiveller, while the hostess naturally takes the arm of her nephew, Lord Goslin (*just from Eton*), so that, as the party is just two ladies short, Dr. Jones, the great historian, and Professor Brown, the famous philologist (*whose wives have not been asked*), bring up the rear together.

THE DOCTOR.—"Well, Professor, we may be of less *consequence* than the rest, but at all events we're the *oldest* and the most renowned!"

THINGS ONE COULD WISH TO HAVE EXPRESSED OTHERWISE

PUZZLED HOSTESS.—"I beg your pardon, Lord Bovril, but *will* you tell me whether I ought to take *your* arm, or Prince Sulkytoff's, or the Duke's?"

LORD BOVRIL (Lord-Lieutenant of the County).—"Well—a—since you ask me, I must tell you that—a—as her Majesty's representative, *I* am bound to claim the honor! But I hope you won't for a moment suppose that I'm fool enough—a—to care *personally* one rap about that sort of thing!"

DANCING MEN

ILL-CONSIDERED UTTERANCES

WELL-PRESERVED ELDERLY COQUETTE.—"Ah! Admiral, *what* a good time we had there, junketing and dancing and flirting! It all seems like yesterday! Do you remember the Carew girls, and your old flame Lucy Masters, and that poor boy Jack Lushington, who was so desperately in love with *me?*"

THE ADMIRAL.—"Indeed I do, dear Lady Maria! And to think of their all dying . . . years ago! . . . *And of old age, too!*"

AN EQUIVOCAL COMPLIMENT

LADY PRATTLER (*a confirmed first-nighter, to actor-manager*).—"I congratulate you on your success last night, Mr. McStamp! . . . How good you were! It was all charmin'—so light, so bright, so well put on the stage! . . . And oh! *such nice long entr'actes*, you know!"

PROFESSIONAL BEAUTIES OF THE PAST

HOUSEKEEPER (*showing visitors over historic mansion*).—"This is the portrait of Queen Catherine of Medici—sister to the *Venus* of that name. . . ."

THE GONDOLETTE

A FESTIVE PROCESSION

Meet of the Four-in-Hand Club, Hyde Park, London.

THE JOYS OF HOSPITALITY

JENKINS.—"Good heavens! Why, there's that brute Tomkins! The skunk! I wonder you can ask such a man to your house! I hope you haven't put him near me at dinner, because I shall cut him dead."

HOSTESS.—"Oh, it's all right. He told me all about you before you came in."

JENKINS.—"Did he? What did he say about *me*, the ruffian?"

HOSTESS.—"Oh, nothing much—merely what you've just been saying about *him*."

TOO KIND BY HALF

HE.—"Oh, I've long given up dancing for my *own* sake. I only dance now with those unlucky girls that don't get partners. Who's that young lady behind you?"

SHE.—"My daughter."

HE.—"Pray, introduce me!"

AN INFELICITOUS SPEECH

"Why, you're looking better already, Sir Ronald!"

"Yes, thanks to your delightful hospitality, I've had everything my doctor ordered me: 'Fresh air, good food, agreeable society, and cheerful conversation that involves no strain on the intellect!'"

DISAPPOINTMENTS OF LION-HUNTING

GUARDSMAN (*gazing at the motley throng*).—"Any great literary or scientific celebrities here to-night, Lady Circe?"

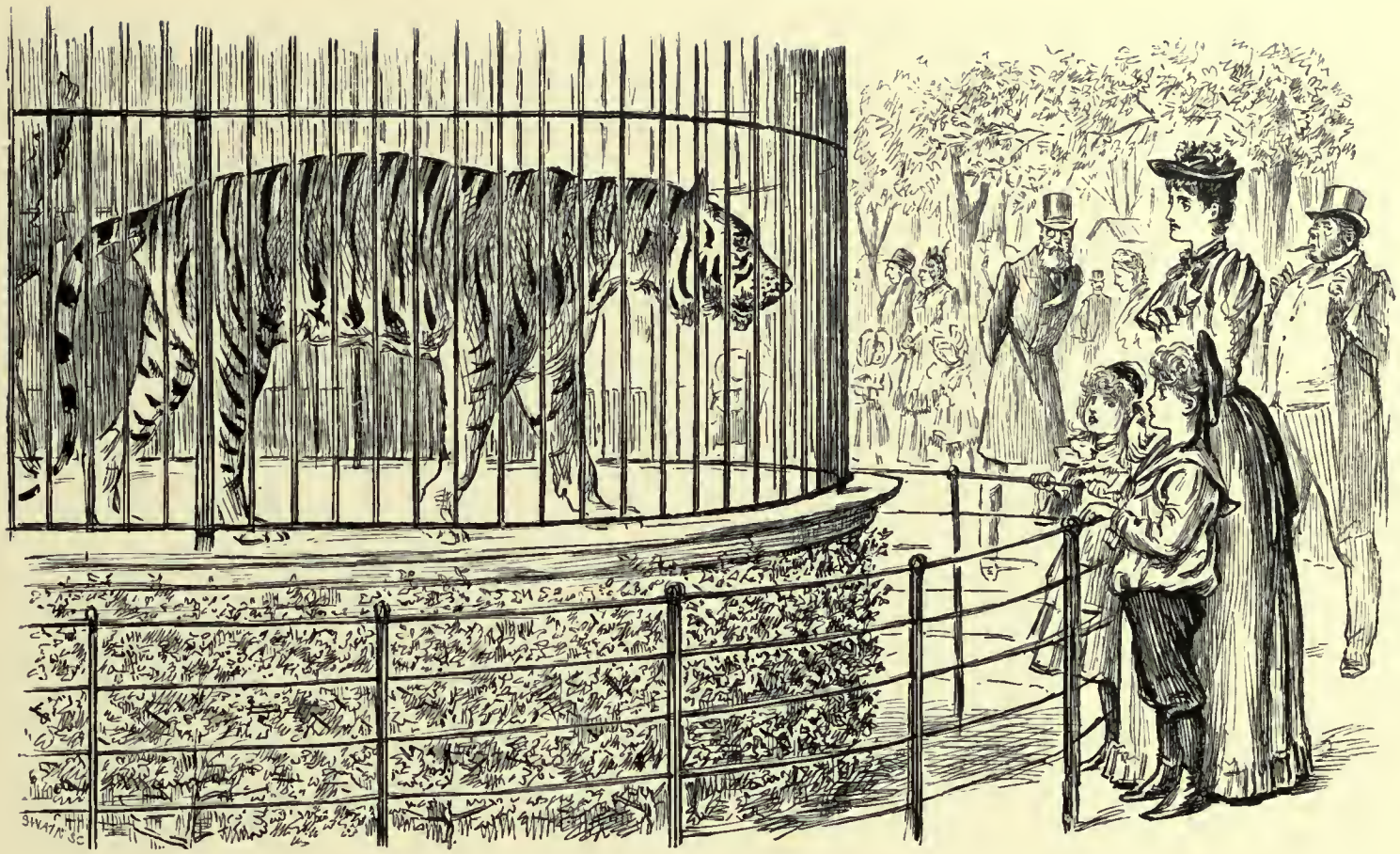
LADY CIRCE (*who has taken to hunting Lions*).—"No, Sir Charles. The worst of celebrities in these democratic days is that they won't come unless you ask their wives and families, too! So I ask the wives and families, and the wives and families come in their thousands, if you please, and the celebrities stay at home and go to bed."

TWO ON A TOWER

JONES (*a rising young British architect*).—"Yes; it's a charming old castle you've bought, Mrs. Prynne, and I heartily congratulate you on being its possessor!"

FAIR CALIFORNIA WIDOW (*just settled in the old country*).—"Thanks. And now you must find me a *legend* for it, Mr. Jones!"

JONES.—"I'm afraid I can't manage *that*; but I could add a *story*, if that will do as well!"



AT THE ZOO

TOMMY.—"Why don't they have little shut-up houses? Why do they have open bars?"
DOROTHY (*who knows everything*).—"Oh! that's for them to see the people, of course!"

NATURE *VERSUS* ART

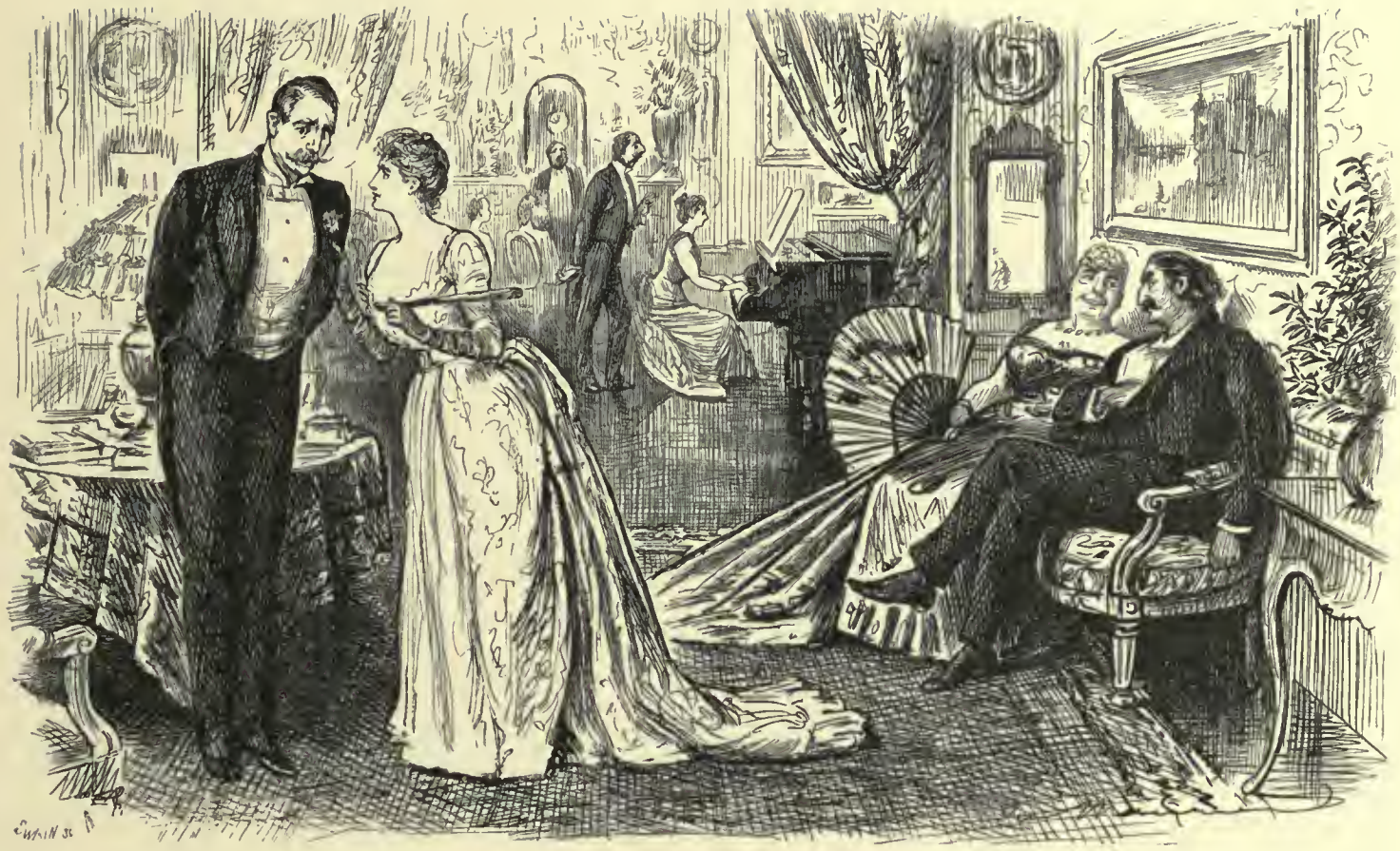
Just as Stodge is about to explain the recondite subtleties of his picture to a select circle of deeply interested and delightfully sympathetic women, his wife comes in with the *baby*, confound it!

A NEW READING OF A FAMOUS PICTURE

"Oh, look, grandpapa! Poor things . . . they're burying the baby!"

ANTE-POSTHUMOUS JEALOUSY

"*Is*n't Emily Firkinson a darling, Reginald?"
"A—ahem—no doubt. I can't say much for her *singing*, you know!"
"Ah! but she's so good and true—a perfect angel! I've known her all my life. I want you to *promise* me something, Reginald."
"Certainly, my love!"
"If I should die young, and you should ever marry again, promise, oh! promise me that it shall be Emily Firkinson!"



DISTINGUISHED PROFESSIONALS

HOSTESS (*to host, after dinner*).—"George, dear, how about asking Signor Robsonio and Signora Smithorelli to sing? They'll be mortally *offended* if we *do*, and they'll be mortally *offended* if we *don't*!"

SOCIAL AGONIES

MRS. BLOKER.—"Oh, I'm sorry to disturb you at breakfast, but I wanted to make *sure* of you. Mr. and Mrs. Dedleigh Boreham are stopping with me for a few days, and I want you to come and dine to-morrow, or, if you are engaged, Wednesday; or Thursday will do, or Friday or Saturday; or *any* day next week!"

(*Mrs. Brown feebly tries to invent that they have some thoughts of sailing to Honolulu this afternoon, and that they have just lost a relative, but breaks down ignominiously.*)

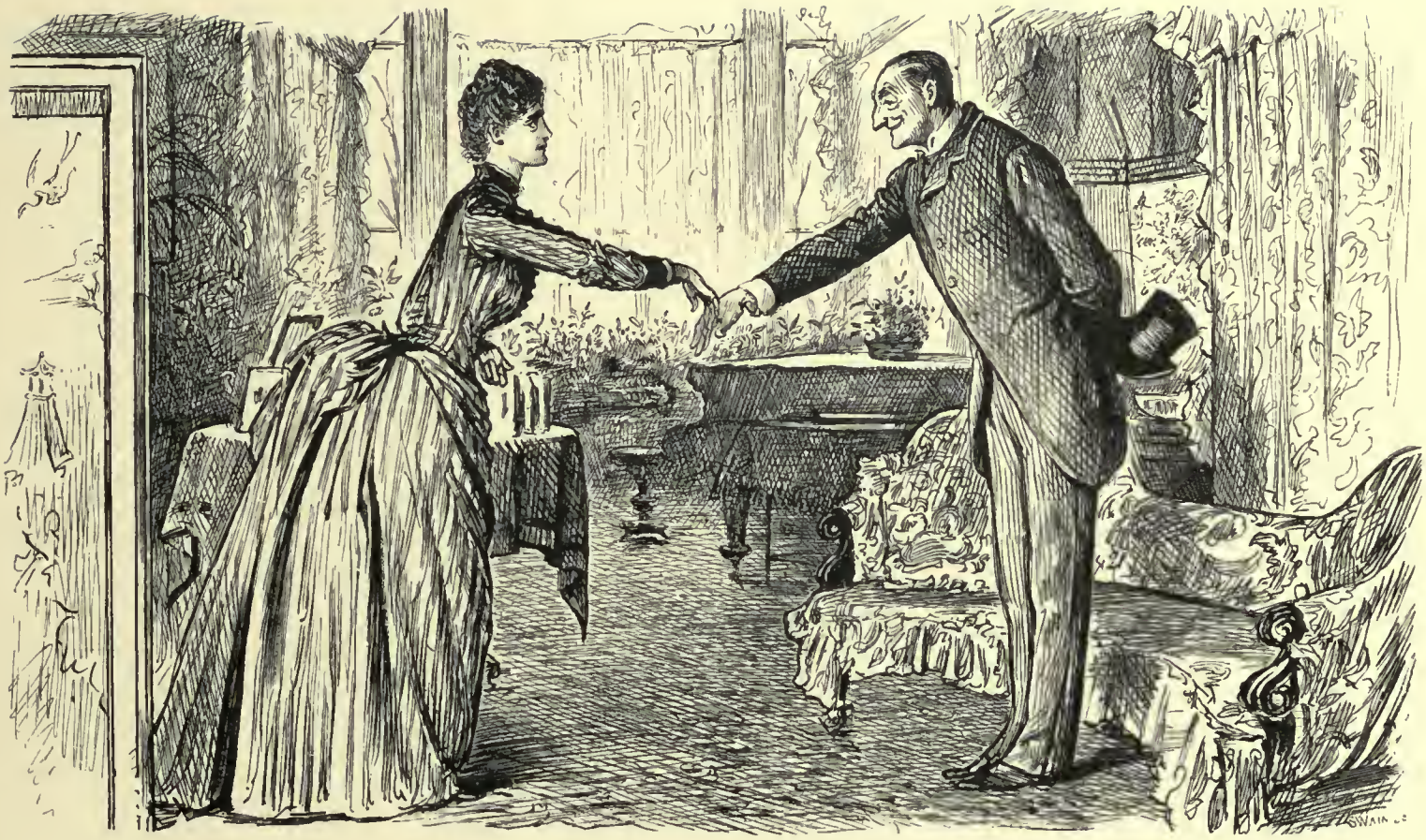
TRUE BLUE

"But doesn't hearing those brilliant speeches sometimes make you change your mind?"

"My *mind?* Oh, often! But my *vote, NEVER!!*"

NOUS AVONS CHANGÉ TOUT CELA

THE OLD MARQUIS OF CARABAS.—"What, madam! There's your lovely but penniless daughter positively dying to marry me; and here I am, willing to settle £20,000 a year on her, and give her one of the oldest titles in England, *and you refuse your consent!!!!* By George, madam, in *my* young days it wasn't the mothers who objected to men of my sort. It was the *daughters themselves!!*"



SPEECHES ONE HAS TO LIVE DOWN

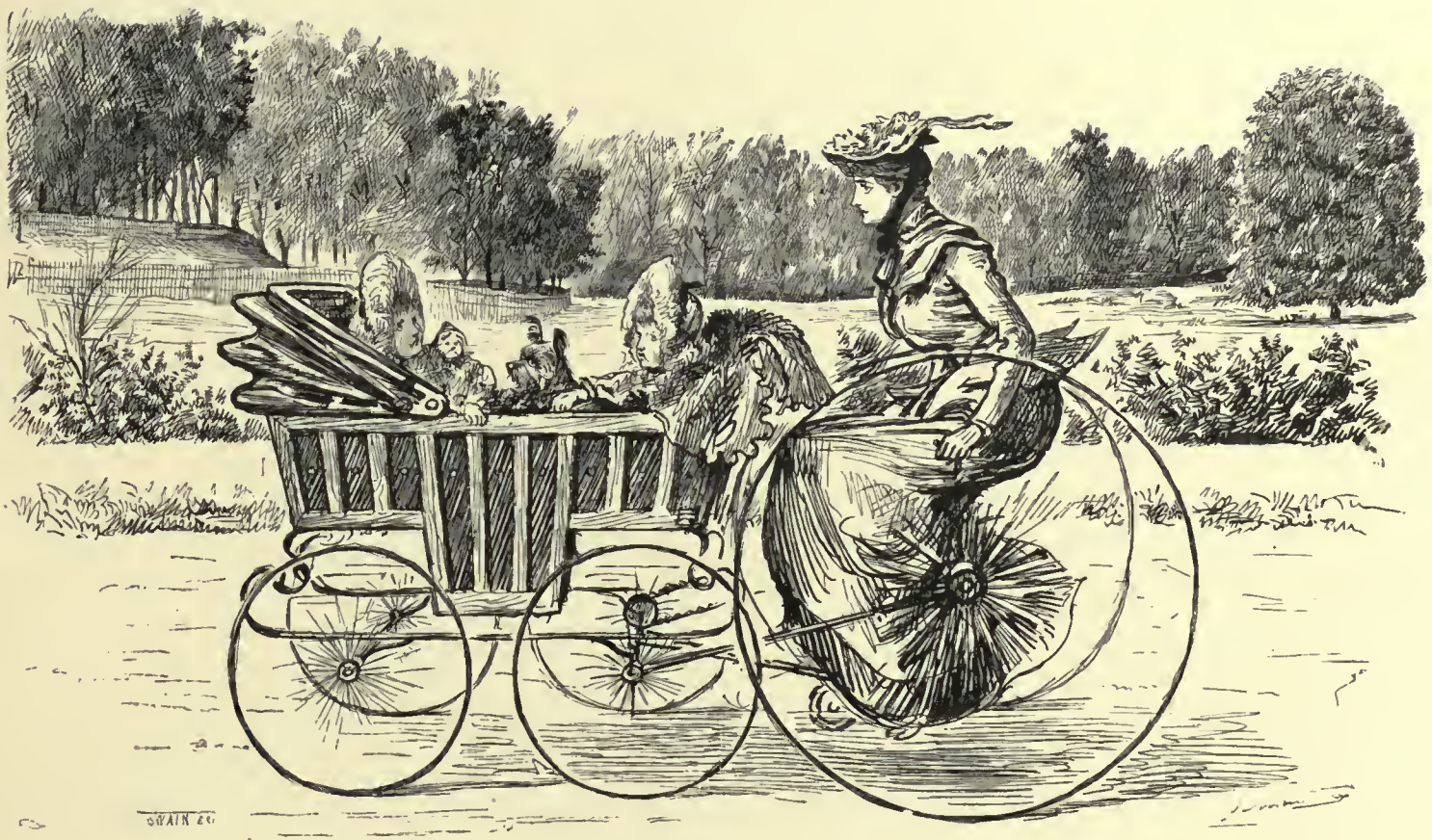
HOSTESS.—"So sorry to have kept you waiting, Mr. Green."
VISITOR.—"Oh, don't mention it. The anticipation, you know, is always so much brighter than the reality."

TOO CONSIDERATE

MRS. BROWN.—"Oh, Mrs. Smith, *do* have that sweet baby of yours brought down to show my husband. He 's never seen it."
MR. BROWN.—"Oh, pray, don't trouble on *my* account."

THINGS ONE WOULD HAVE EXPRESSED DIFFERENTLY

GENIAL HOSTESS.—"What, going already, Professor? . . . And *must* you take your wife away with you?"
THE PROFESSOR (*with grave politeness*).—"Indeed, madam, *I am sorry to say I MUST!*"



HAPPY THOUGHT

FLUNKYANA

(A Visit to the Portrait-Gallery of Brabazon Towers.)

"Pardon me! But you have passed over that picture in the corner. An old Dutch master, I think."

"Oh, *that!* 'The Burgermaster' it's called. By Rembrank, I b'lieve. It ain't nothing much. Only a work of hart. *Not one of the family, you know!*"

"OH, DON'T YOU REMEMBER SWEET ALICE, BEN BOLT?"

A WINDOW STUDY

THE MAIDEN.—"Good-morning, Mr. Jones! How do you like my hyacinths?"
THE CURATE.—"Well, they prevent me from seeing *you!* I should prefer *Lower* cinths!"

SO *ENGLISH*, YOU KNOW!

The Miss Browns (*of "a good" Bayswater family*) playing "Buffalo Gals," with variations, on two American banjoes and an American parlor-grand.

SOCIAL TARRADIDDLES

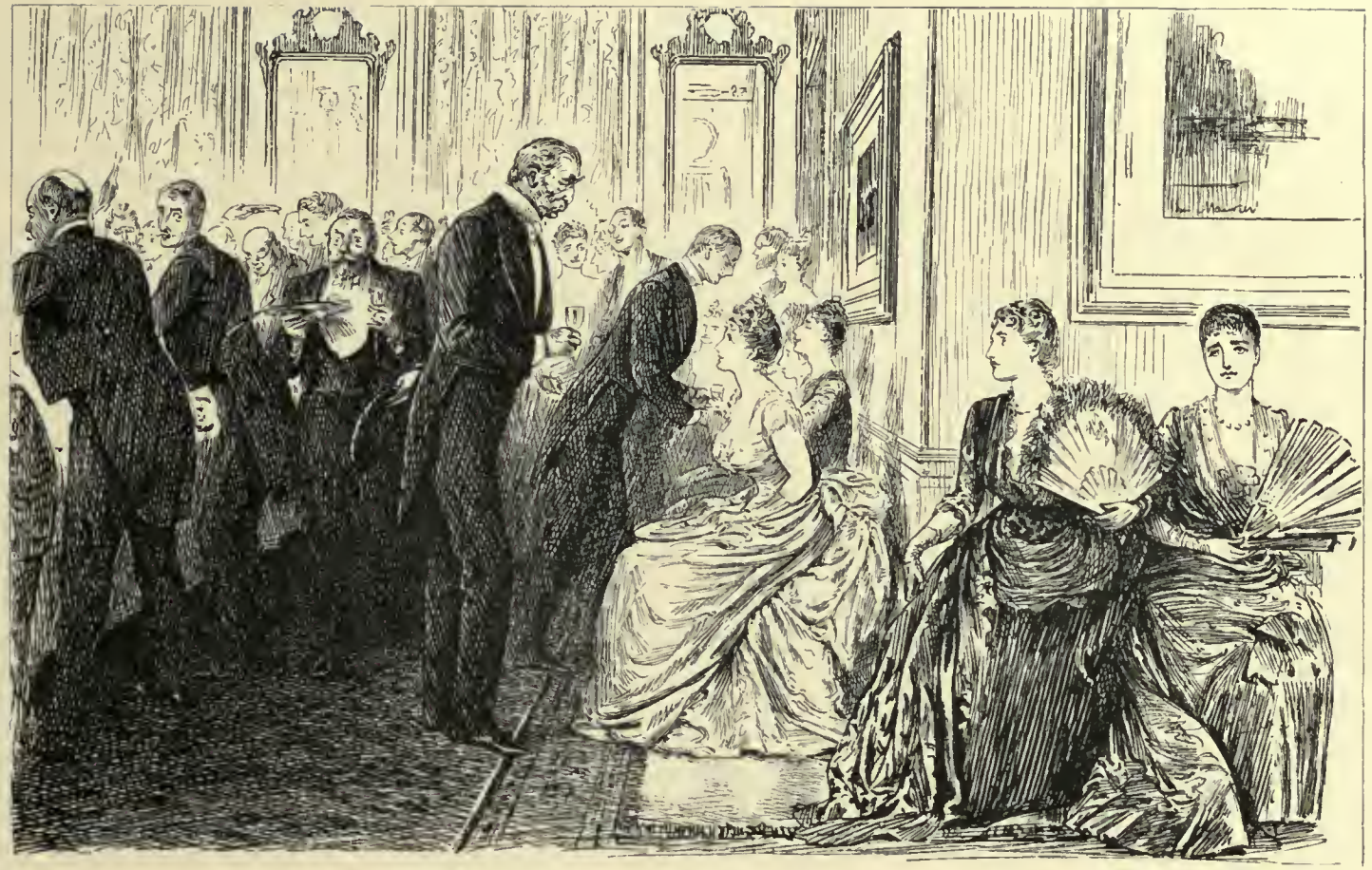
MRS. GUSHINGTON (*aside to her husband*).—"What a long, tiresome piece of music that was! Who's it by, I wonder?"

MR. GUSHINGTON.—"Beethoven, my love."

MRS. GUSHINGTON (*to hostess*).—"My *dear* Mrs. Brown, what *heavenly* music! How in every *bar* one feels the stamp of the greatest genius the world has ever known!"

LOVE'S LABOR LOST

"Oh, papa, we've all quite made up our minds *never to marry*, now we've got this beautiful house and garden!"
(*Papa has taken this beautiful house and garden solely with the view of tempting eligible young men to come and play lawn-tennis, etc., etc.*)



THE MARCH OF PROGRESS

SHE.—"After all, there's nothing better than the wing of a chicken! *Is* there, General?"
HE.—"I never tasted the wing of a chicken. I only know the *legs!* When I was *young*, you know, my *parents* always ate the wings, and *now*, my *children* always do!"

AN INFELICITOUS QUESTION

ÆSTHETIC YOUTH.—"I hope by degrees to have this room filled with nothing but the most perfectly beautiful things. . . ."
SIMPLE-MINDED GUARDSMAN.—"And what are you going to do with *these*, then?"

I MUST HAVE THIS TOOTH OUT!

"I must have this tooth out, it hurts so!"
"Oh, *please* don't, or *I* shall have to wear it, as I do *all* of your left-off things!"

NEMESIS

MRS. CONSTANTIA (*to old adorer, who has married for money*).—"And these are your children, Ronald? Oh!... how like their mother!"

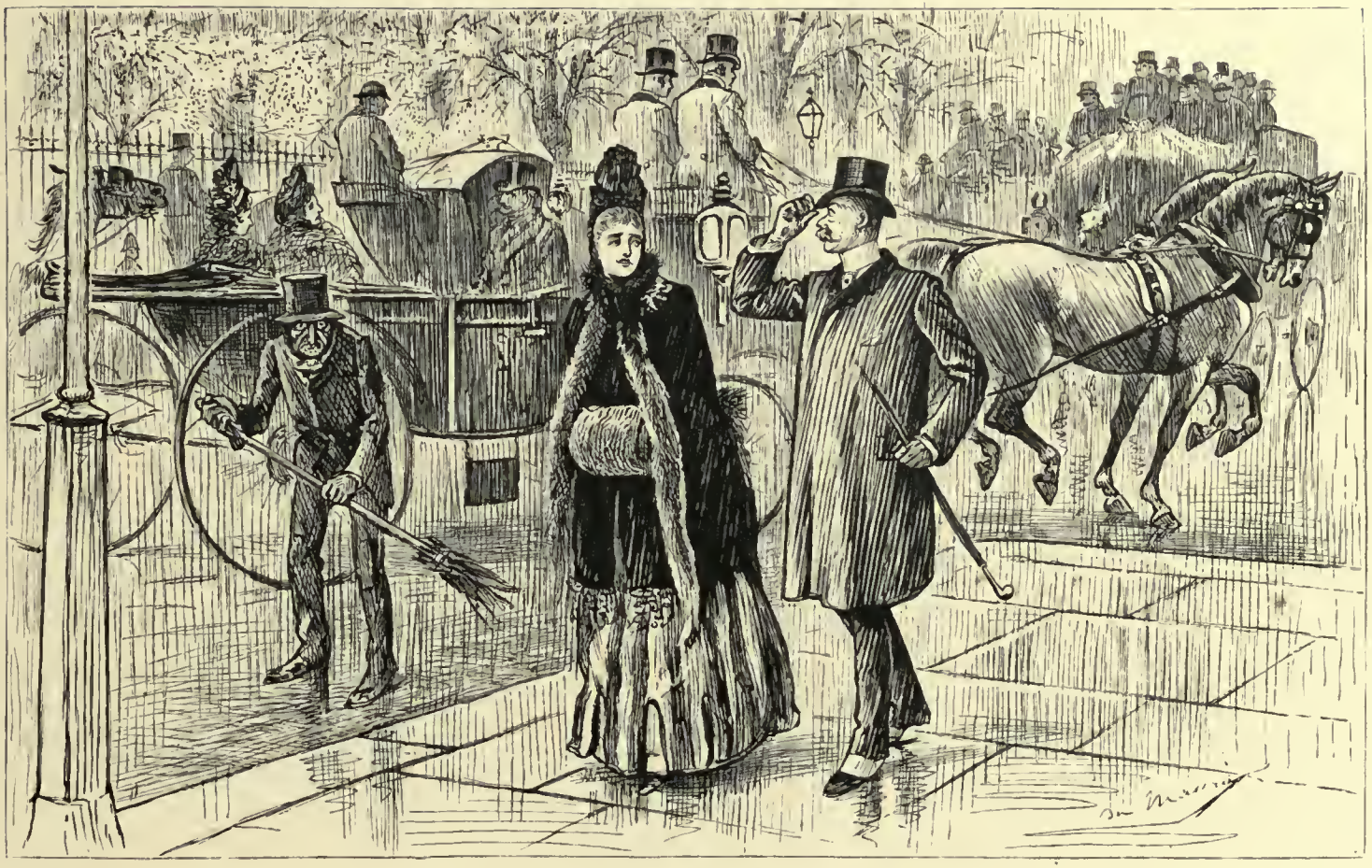
TOO LATE

HE.—"What! You haven't got a dance left?"
SHE.—"No. It's past two o'clock! Why didn't you come earlier?"
HE.—"Well, a feller must *dine*, you know!"

FEMININE PERVERSITY

SHE-GOSSIP (*alluding to newly-wedded pair*).—"There go 'Beauty and the Beast,' as they are called! She *would* marry him. Her parents strongly opposed the match, as you may imagine."

HE-GOSSIP (*who flatters himself that he understands the sex*).—"By George! The parental opposition must have been strong to make her marry such a ruffian as that!"

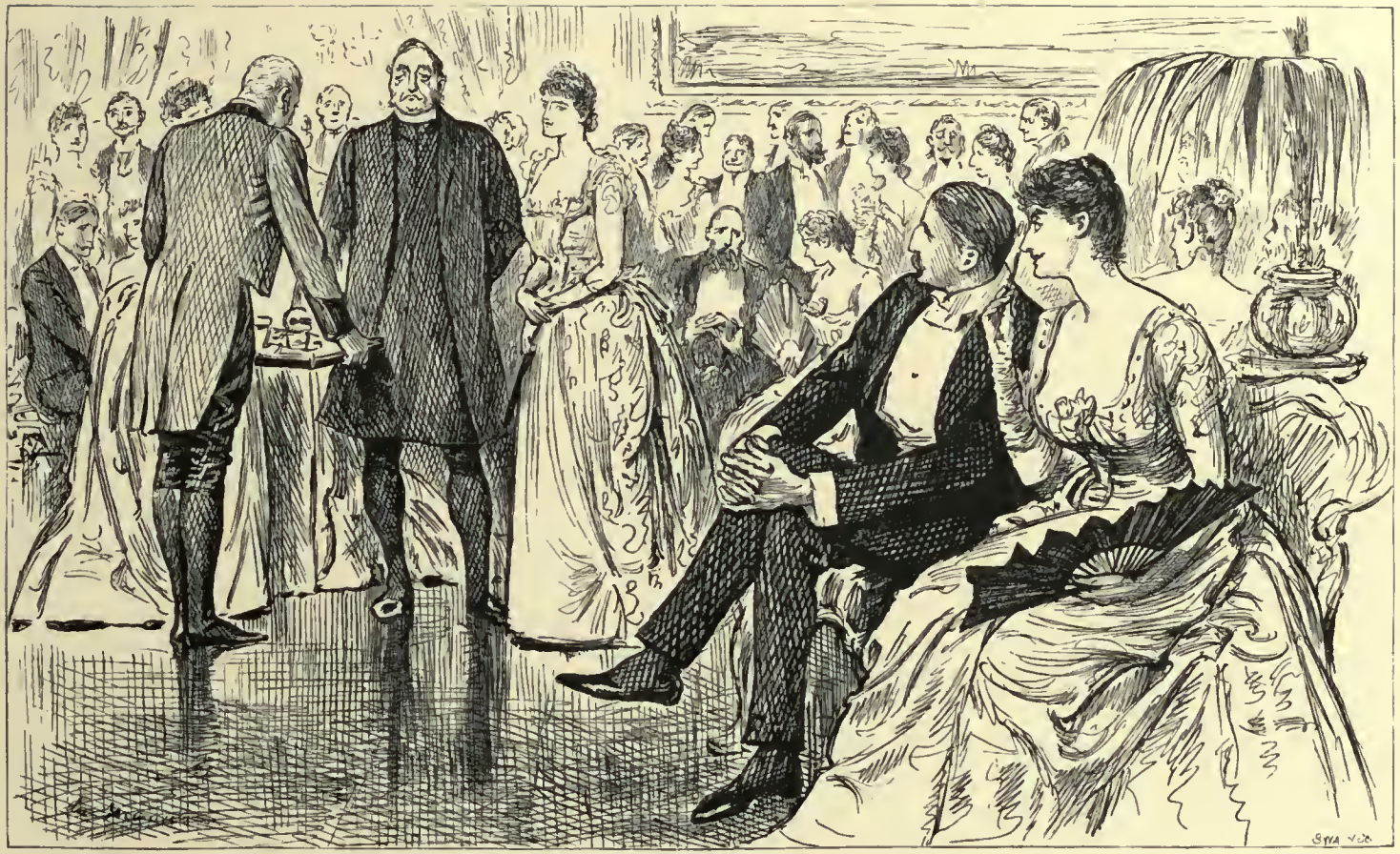


CONSOLATION

De Snookke.—"There goes Mrs. *Gatherum!* She never asks *me* to her parties! I suppose I am not *swell* enough!"
Sympathetic Lady-Friend.—"Oh, it can't be *that!* One meets the most rowdy people in London there."

CAPTAIN LELONGBOW

CAPTAIN LELONGBOW (*a fascinating but most inveterate romancer about his own exploits*).—"Who's your favorite hero in *fiction*, Miss Vera?"
MISS VERA.—"*You* are!"

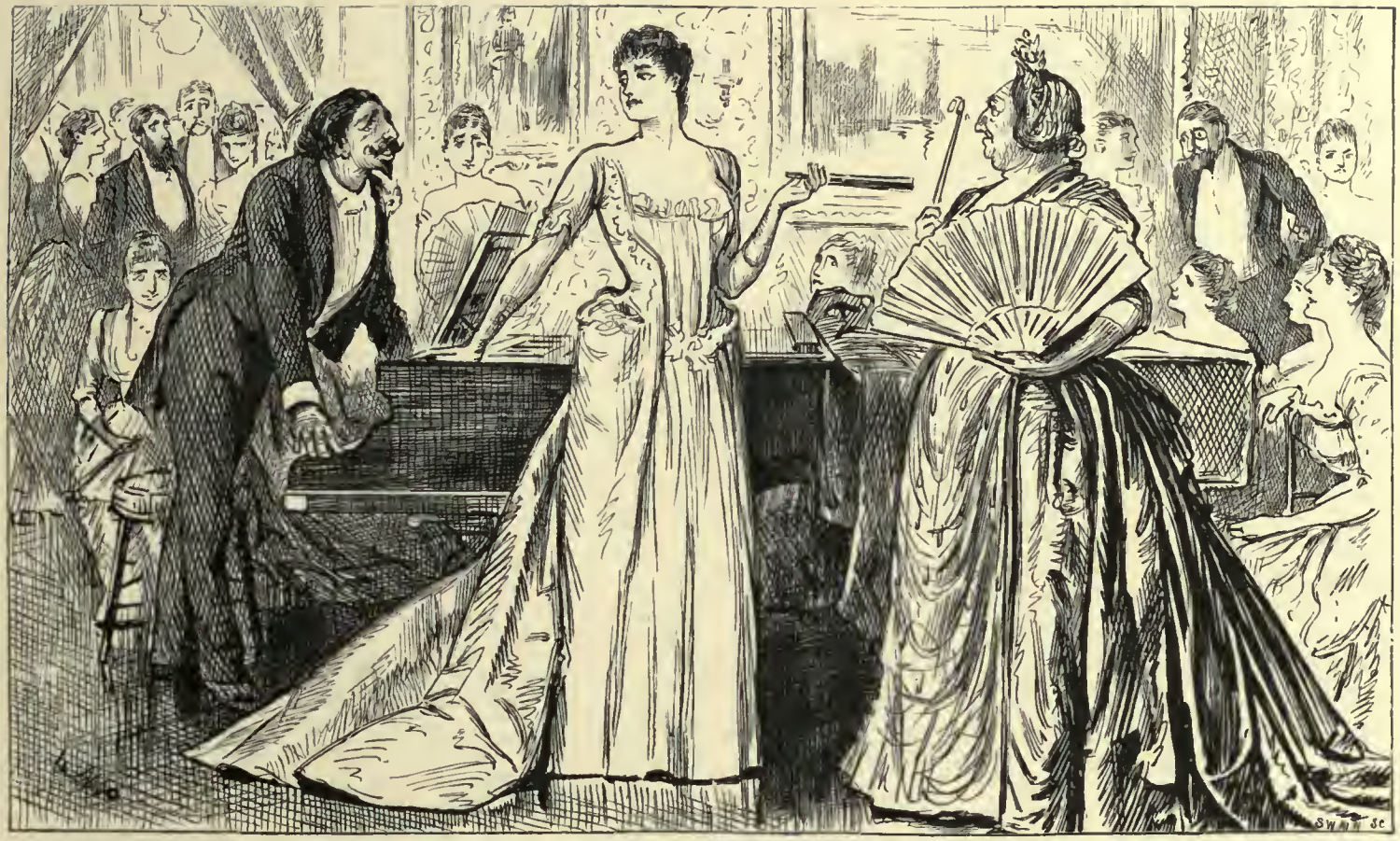


ÆSTHETICS

MRS. VAN TROMP.—"Oh, Sir Charles! Modern English male attire is *too* hideous. Just look round . . . there are only two decently dressed men in the room!"

SIR CHARLES.—"Indeed! And which are *they*, may I ask?"

MRS. VAN TROMP.—"Well, I don't know *who* they are, exactly; but just now one seems to be offering the other a cup of tea."



AN ACCOMMODATION

VOCALIST (*to fair Stranger*).—"A—I'm going to sing '*Fain would I clasp thee closer, love!*' May I look at you while I am singing?"
FAIR STRANGER.—"Oh, certainly! Or at my grandmother."

"SVENGALI! . . . SVENGALI! . . . SVENGALI!"

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